Meritous Experience Plug-in for Fuzion

By Mark Chase (Click here for more **Atomik Fuzion**)

The "Meritous" Experience plug-in is a character Experience Point and Improvement system to replace the default one used in most Fuzion games. It is more complex, but it also offers a great deal more diversity. It is also a "Curved" improvement system, where attaining super-human levels in abilities and skills become increasingly more difficult.

As the name implies, the Meritous Experience System rewards characters with Experience Points (XP) for accomplishments, victories, and success. But it also punishes for failures, including poor role-playing. XP is different from OP, however, and they should not be mistaken for the same thing. The GM will never award with OP, instead, he will give out XP and all character improvements will be done with XP using the exchange tables described later.

Index to this Document

XP and How it Works
Rewarding XP
Defeating Adversaries
Defeating Machines
General Awards
Skill Awards (sXP)
Character Improvement
Improving Skills with sXP
Improving Skills with General XP
MUST LEARN NOW
Improving Primary Characteristics
Improving Derived Characteristics
Talents, Perks, Powers, and Complications
Other Things
In Summary

XP and How it Works

Experience Points (XP) are given by the GM to required accomplishments, victories, and success, but can also be taken away for failures (unless the GM is adamantly against doing such a thing). XP is not directly related OP, CP, or PP in any way. However, as you will see, it can be converted if necessary.

Rewarding XP

There are many ways to get (and lose) XP. First, XP can be earned by defeating adversaries (not necessarily killing them, however). Second, a character can earn sXP for specific skills whenever a success is made (sXP is distinctive from XP because it can only be applied to improving that one skill). A character will also earn XP for completing adventures, good role-playing, and so forth.

Defeating Adversaries

One of the main ways to earn XP is simply to defeat adversaries, be it a thief, soldier, monster, or a diabolical villain. It may also include machines, such as a mecha or robots, or even a bomb counting down to doomsday. But first it should be explained that defeating an adversary does not necessarily mean killing him (though, of course, it could). Defeating a bad guy could simply mean capturing him or throwing him in jail. Foiling the plans of the villain (i.e., his plot to take over the world) counts also a defeating him, even if he was not killed or captured. He was defeated within the context of the adventure, and so points should be awarded for his defeat. But again, in most cases "defeating an adversary" means slaying him. For the most part, these are small time adversaries, like henchmen, "yesmen", guards, or soldiers, who of course have a much lower point value.

To find the XP Value for defeating an Adversary, total up his CP an multiply it by the number below (categories by importance):

Importance	XP multiple
Minor (a no-body, minor monster, small time crook) about 30 CP	Total CP x 1
Average (henchman, soldier, your average monster) about 40 CP	Total CP x 5
Important (general, commander, major monster) about 50 CP	Total CP x 20
Major (the Big Bad Guy and/or his Seconds) greater than 60 CP	Total CP x 100

The XP must be split between all characters involved with defeating the adversary, be it one character or a dozen. It is the GM's responsibility to split this XP fairly (if he believes an equal split is fair, that is fine). If some character's played only a minor role, they should get a smaller cut, characters who played a major role get a larger cut, and so forth.

For example, our team, "the Super Six", have defeated Dr. Synister's second man (Major Villayn), whose total CP adds up to 75. This in

turn equals 7500 XP for his defeat. Because all six of the Super Six played an equal role in defeating him, we decide to split it up equally, giving each PC 1250 XP. But if only three of the Super Six played a major roll, and the other three played supporting roles (or were out of the action), then the first three might get 1750 XP each, and the other three would get 750 XP each. Clearly, defeating an adversary by yourself grants the most XP, but then again, it is equally more difficult to do!

Defeating Machines

Defeating a machine (destroying a tank or mecha, disarming a bomb, or stopping Dr. Synister's rampaging Robot-Warrior of Doom^{tm}), awards XP in much the same way that defeating adversaries. Most machines are built with CP (Construction Points) which are like CP (Character Points) in value. Therefore, defeating or destroying such a machine will grant XP in the same fashion. Because the are not living, willful adversaries (at least, non-sentient ones) destroying machines only wards XP equal to 5 x CP value of the machine (which may have to be made up by the GM). For example, disarming a nuclear bomb (judged by the GM to be 30 CP) will grant 150 XP. Defeating a giant 200 CP mecha robot will award 1000 XP. Furthermore, killing or defeating the pilot of the machine will also award XP for his defeat, as listed above, and it also would if it foiled the plans of an adversary (i.e., disarming the nuclear bomb would probably count as defeating the adversary responsible). If the machine is sentient (an intelligent robot or AI computer) it should be treated as a true adversary, and could have a x20 or x100 XP modifier, rather than x5 (depending on how "major" it is).

Just as illustrated above, the XP must be split between all characters involved with defeating the machine (and/or its pilot).

General Awards

The general award of XP should be given at the end of a gaming session, when a goal is attained, or otherwise meritous accomplishment is made. This is individual for each PC, and can very greatly. It is up to the GM to determine the mount of general XP granted at the end of each game session. But here are some guidelines to follow. Note that some events have negative XP. For these, XP should be subtracted from the total XP granted, but XP should never be less than 0. This does not need to be followed exactly; these are only guidelines.

Event	XP Granted
Very poor role-playing or unacceptable attitude	-100 XP
Poor (or no) role-playing or a "munchkin" attitude	-50 XP
Bland, uneventful, or out-of-character role-playing	+0 XP
Passable to average role-playing	+5 XP
Average to good role-playing	+10 XP
Exceptional, creative, or active role-playing	+30 XP
Excellent, interactive, and deeply involved role-playing	+50 XP
Used a skill, talent, or ability in a new or unique way	+30 XP
Selfless act of heroism (placing life in great peril)	+100 XP
Selfish act of cowardice (unless the PC is a coward)	-50 XP
Took a significant risk and pulled through	+20 XP
Active leader or supportive follower	+10 XP
Triumphed against insurmountable odds	+80XP
Resolved a potentially violent situation peacefully	+60 XP
Played up a character flaw or negative trait	+40 XP
Used a Contact or Perk to solve a problem	+30XP
Solved a serious problem or mystery	+50 XP
Made a *good* deceive move or important decision	+40XP
Developed a plan of action, that worked	+50 XP
Developed a plan, but it failed utterly	+0 XP
Caused an otherwise viable plan to fail	-20 XP

Skill Awards (sXP)

Skill Experience (sXP) is XP applied to a specific skill for successful usage of that skill. Though general XP can of course be applied to skills for improvement, sXP will accumulate on each individual skill and will automatically push that skill to its next level when enough points have been built up. Any success will give an automatic bonus to the sXP of that skill. It is up to the GM to determain the level of this bonus (usually between +1 to +5), but as a guideline it should be related to the level of Difficulty itself (minor success give +1, but sucess against Heroic or greater DVs should give +3 or +4). Extraordinary or highly creative uses of a skill could grant at +5, but this is rare.

Any Critical Success will grant sXP equal to the Margin of Success, but at minimum +5 sXP. For example, if you make a Critical Success and succeed by 7, then you gain +7 sXP to that skill. If you make a Critical Success and succeed by only 2, then you will still gain a +5 bonus (it was Critical Success after all). A Critical Failure, however, will reduce the sXP total by -1 (but never lower it below 0).

- Any success will give an automatic bonus between +1 to +5 sXP to that skill (up to GM)
- Any Critical Success will grant sXP equal to +5, or the Margin of Success (the higher)
- A Critical Failure will reduce the sXP total by -1, but never lower it below 0.

As soon as enough sXP has accumulated on that skill to increase it to the next level, it will automatically increase to that level, spending the required sXP. It is best to note the total sXP next to the skill it is related to.

Character Improvement

So, you have 1340 XP, but what do you do with all that experience? Buy character improvements, of course! With XP you can improve skills, increase Derived or Primary Characteristics, add Talents or Powers, remove Complications, or buy other items/equipment which cost OP.

Improving Skills with sXP

Skills can improve two ways: with sXP or general XP, or a combination thereof. Skill improvement works on a curve, where higher levels cost more than lower levels. Skills that gain sXP will increase to the next level once they have accumulated enough sXP. Thus, if a level 2 skill has accumulated 50 sXP, it will *spend all 50 sXP* and increase to level 3. Its sXP is now 0, and it must build up to 80 sXP to move on to level 4. Rarely ever will skills improve past level 3 in this manner, since the XP cost becomes increasingly higher (it would take three or four major Critical Successes to boost a level 3 skill to level 4). After this point, skills may have to be improved with general XP and hard study.

Skill Level	XP Cost
To get Level 1	10 XP
Level 1 to 2	20 XP
Level 2 to 3	50 XP
Level 3 to 4	80 XP
Level 4 to 5	120 XP
Level 5 to 6	180 XP
Level 6 to 7	250 XP
Level 7 to 8	320 XP
Level 8 to 9	400 XP
Level 9 to 10	500 XP

Improving Skills with General XP

Clearly, using sXP alone is not the only way to improve skills. But sXP is learning through direct experience. If you must improve a skill with general XP, this is considered learning through study, and is more difficult. The XP cost is the same (as above) but you must spend time to learn the skill.

You must spend 1 hour of study for every point of general XP spent improving a skill. Thus, if improving a level 1 skill to level 2 would require 20 XP and 20 hours of study (that is basically like taking a 3 hour course in college for 3 weeks, assuming you study an additional 3 hours outside of class). If you have a mentor or tutor, cut the time in half. Otherwise it is assumed you are learning on your own (through reading, practicing, etc.).

Increasing a skill from level 3 to 4 would cost a total of 80 XP. But if you already had 30 sXP in the skill then you need only apply 50 general XP, and thus, only spend 50 hours of study (say, spending 2 hours every day for three and a half weeks). To jump suddenly from level 3 to level 8 would cost 950 XP and nearly a year of study!

MUST LEARN NOW

There are times of great peril and turmoil where heroic men and women must stand mighty against the forces of evil and the powers darkness. In such times, it is hard not to be late getting to school. To this end, it is possible to force XP to act as sXP, and apply it directly to the improvement of a skill. How this works is somewhat metaphysical, but basically involves the culmination of your knowledge and experience to elevate your competence in a particular area. In otherwords -- whatever.

Because you are not learning the skill from direct experience (sXP) or through study (see above), a great deal of XP is wasted in this process. It takes 10 XP to equal 1 sXP, and this can only be done with the GM's permission. For example, Leo must increase his skill in sword fighting (his level in Swords is only 1), because he suddenly finds himself teleported back in time to the 12th century AD. He has no time to study (his girlfriends has just been kidnapped by Talon the Terrible), but he has a lot of XP to spare and wants to get Swords at level 3. Normally, this would require 110 sXP (or 110 general XP and 110 hours of study). To convert general XP to sXP would require him to burn 1100 XP. So Leo summons up the culmination of all he has learned and experienced (i.e., from seeing sword fights on TV and at the movies), and magically gains 2 levels in Swords. But it was not cheap.

Improving Primary Characteristics

GMs should be discouraged from allowing a PC to increase his or her Primary Characteristics, but it can be allowed under special game-related reasons (i.e., intense training in the Martial Arts to increase STR or CON). To improve a Primary Characteristic, simply apply the XP require to increase it to the next level:

Characteristic	XP Cost

Level 1 to 2	500 XP
Level 2 to 3	700 XP
Level 3 to 4	900 XP
Level 4 to 5	1200 XP
Level 5 to 6	1500 XP
Level 6 to 7	1800 XP
Level 7 to 8	2200 XP
Level 8 to 9	2600 XP
Level 9 to 10	3000 XP

To increase a Primary Characteristic from level 4 to 5 costs a total of 1200 XP. But to jump suddenly from level 4 to level 8 would cost 6700 XP.

Improving Derived Characteristics

Instead of improving Primary Characteristics, most PCs should improve their Derived Characteristics instead. In general, this is a direct XP to OP conversion (100 XP to 1 OP). If a Derived Characteristic costs 5 OP to increase under the standard Fuzion rules, then it costs 500 XP.

Derived Characteristic	XP Cost
+1 Hit Point	100 XP
+1 Stun Point	100 XP
+1 SD (or ED)	250 XP
+1 REC	500 XP
+1 SPD	1000 XP
+1 END	50 XP
+1 RES	150 XP
+1 HUM	100 XP
+1 LUCK	250 XP

Talents, Perks, Powers, and Complications

To make things simple, the OP cost of Talents, Perks, and Complications can be converted directly to its XP value (100 XP to 1 OP). So a Talent with a 3 OP value costs 300 XP. To get ride of a 15 OP value Complication costs 1500 OP. Powers convert at a 500 XP to 1 PP ratio. Keep in mind, however, PCs should not be adding new Talents or Powers, generally speaking (adding Perks and removing Complications is, however, acceptable).

Other Things

For everything else which might costs OP, CP, or PP (i.e., special equipment, weapons, cyberware, etc.) just remember these general conversion rules:

- 1 OP equals 100 XP
- 1 PP equals 500 XP
- 1 CP equals 500 XP

In Summary

So, in Summary, these are the rules for Meritous Experience:

- 1 OP equals 100 XP
- 1 PP equals 500 XP
- 1 CP equals 500 XP
- General XP is awarded by the GM at the end of every game session
- Any success will give an automatic bonus of +1 to +5 sXP to that skill (up to GM)
- Any Critical Success will grant sXP equal to +5, or the Margin of Success (the higher)
- A Critical Failure will reduce the sXP total by -1, but never lower it below 0
- Skills which gain sXP will increase to the next level once they have accumulated enough sXP

- Levels can be improved in Skills by spending general XP and study time equal to the XP spent
- General XP can be burned to turn it instantly into sXP (10 XP equals 1 sXP), with the GM's permission
- Primary Characteristics can be improved with general XP, in accordance to the table, but only with the GM's permission
- Derived Characteristics can be improved with general XP, in accordance to the table, but essentially at an XP cost equal to the OP value x 100
- The same applies for Talents, Perks, Powers, Complications, and other "point value" items.

Go to the Fuzion Core for more great **Fuzion** Plug-ins

Fuzion© the FUZION LABS GROUP, 1997. All rights are reserved under International Copyright Conventions.
Fuzion© is the Fuzion Labs Group's trademark name for it's multigenre roleplaying system.
To obtain permission or licensing information, contact the Fuzion Labs Group at HeroGames@aol.com